

# FORESTRY FACTS

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## **The Managed Forest Law: What Constitutes a Mandatory Practice?**

William Klase, UW-Extension Basin Educator  
Rich Lavalley, WI DNR Forest Tax Law Field Specialist

Approved Managed Forest Law (MFL) management plans will or may contain mandatory practices. As a participant in the MFL program, you will be required to implement these mandatory management prescriptions in order to fulfill your part of the agreement.

Mandatory practices include:

1. Harvesting mature timber according to sound forestry: Timber harvests can range from the removal of selected trees within a forest or the removal of all of the trees within a given area. The type of harvest that takes place depends on the objectives of the landowner and the type of forest present or the potential stand conditions based on the growing conditions.

2. Thinning plantations and natural stands for merchantable products: Thinning is a forest practice to create more growing space for some of the trees by removing others and thereby improving the health and vigor of the remaining trees. The trees that are harvested have value for a number of forest products industries and are therefore called “merchantable.”

3. Release of conifers from competing vegetation: For many forests where the desired composition is primarily coniferous trees (i.e., trees with cones like pine, spruce, fir, and cedar), frequently there exists a high percentage of competing trees or grasses that need to be removed to ensure the success of the coniferous trees. As the trees or grasses are removed, the remaining coniferous trees are said to be “released” or have more room to grow.

4. Reforestation of land: Properties to be entered into the MFL program must meet a minimum level of trees per acre. A minimum of 200 trees per acre is needed for a property to be considered productive and qualify for entry into the program. That number must be improved to a minimum of 600 seedlings per acre for planted seedlings or 800 naturally established seedlings per acre within three years of being enrolled or being deforested. Additionally, in some cases additional tree seedlings must be planted to supplement areas where the natural seedling growth or the planted trees are inadequate to fully stock the future forest.

5. Post harvest treatment to insure adequate regeneration: Following a timber harvest, there can be excessive residual, low value trees that can inhibit the growth of seedlings of desired species. Treatment of residual trees can include mechanical felling of trees or chemical treatment of seedlings and saplings.

6. Soil conservation practices to control erosion from forestry practices: Forest management activities can cause excessive erosion if care is not taken in the implementation of the management plan. Best Management Practices were developed to guide foresters in the design and timing of activities to minimize soil loss due to erosion. Conservation practices might include reduced activities near bodies of water, seeding and installing water bars and diversions on logging roads, and locating logging roads and stream crossings where they will have the least impact on sensitive areas.